

NORTHGATE STAKEHOLDERS GROUP

Draft Ground Rules

Ground rules are agreed upon procedures for working together in a group. They establish trust by setting guidelines that are fair, equitable and productive. They clarify group procedures for conducting meetings, reporting results, resolving differences and accomplishing the task of the group.

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

On December 8, 2003, the City Council passed Resolution 30642 with the Mayor's concurrence. Entitled the Northgate Framework Resolution, it stated the City's intention "to maintaining transparency and open discussion with the community in order to ensure the health and vitality of the Northgate area." It went on to say,

"The City is committed to providing meaningful opportunities for public input as the actions described in this resolution are developed and implemented. In addition to providing opportunities for general public involvement, the City intends to facilitate the creation of a Northgate Urban Center Stakeholders Group. DPD in conjunction with the Seattle Planning Commission and the Department of Neighborhoods is directed to facilitate the formation of the stakeholders group by February 1, 2004 to advise the City on future planning and strategies for implementing the NACP [Northgate Area Comprehensive Plan] vision. The purpose of the stakeholders group shall be to promote discussion and information sharing among representatives of interest groups and to provide advice to the City on activities related to implementing the goals of the NACP for a vibrant Urban Center." (page 8)

The resolution further stated (page 8) that the stakeholders group

"shall focus initially on advising the City on coordinating, developing, and implementing the following efforts:

1. an Urban Center Plan for open space and pedestrian connections including bicycle and pedestrian circulation and streetscape improvements,
2. the Coordinated Transportation Investment Plan, [Resolution 30641]
3. implementation of the 5th Ave NE Streetscape Design, and
4. planning for large lot developments (particularly early input on conceptual site planning), including but not limited to the Northgate Mall, the South Lot, and King County's transit-oriented development project.

On items 1 and 2 above, the stakeholders group should be consulted on the scoping and design of work programs, consultant selection, and review of conceptual plans and draft planning products. The Executive will also provide the stakeholders group with briefings and updates and solicit advice at key junctures on implementation of the other work program items in this Resolution, which will further implement the NACP."

Thus, the stakeholders group was created to help assure that the planning and decision-making process for Northgate's redevelopment is open and responsive to public concerns.

In addition to committing the City to using the stakeholders group to help provide public input as part of its Northgate redevelopment work, the City commits to receiving and using the group's advice as a resource for making decisions about the issues identified in resolution 30642 and to reporting back how the group's advice was used in decision-making. If the advice cannot be used, the City will explain why.

STAKEHOLDERS GROUP COMPOSITION

The resolution identified the following 22 seats for the stakeholders group:

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| 1. King County/Metro | 13. Property owners of 3 acres or more |
| 2. Simon Properties | 14. Residents in senior housing
(resident or staff) |
| 3. Maple Leaf Community Council | 15. Residents in
apartments/condominiums |
| 4. Licton Springs Community Council | 16. Multi-family housing developers |
| 5. Haller Lake Community Council | 17. Businesses inside the Mall |
| 6. Pinehurst Community Council | 18. Businesses outside the Mall |
| 7. Victory Heights Community
Council | 19. Youth groups |
| 8. Northgate Chamber of Commerce | 20. Organized labor in the Northgate
area |
| 9. Thornton Creek Alliance | 21. At-large |
| 10. Thornton Creek Legal Defense Fund | 22. At-large |
| 11. North Seattle Community College | |
| 12. Northwest Hospital | |

Stakeholder group members are selected as specified in the resolution. Representatives and alternates for seats 1-12 are selected by the organizations and entities named in resolution 30642. Members for seats 13-22 are nominated by interested citizens and groups; the final slate of members for seats 13-22 is recommended by the independent facilitation team responsible for convening the stakeholders group.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

Each of the 22 seats has one representative and one alternate. Only one person sits at the table for each seat. Representatives and alternates commit to keeping one another informed so that either person can speak on behalf of their interest.

Members are asked to represent the points of view of their general interest area, not the particular organization from which they come.

Members will select a Chairperson from its members by nomination, closed ballot and majority vote. If there is no majority, a closed-ballot runoff will be conducted between the two nominees with the most votes to determine the Chair.

Members will seek to share discussion time, encouraging everyone to participate fully.

All participants recognize the legitimacy of the concerns and interests of others whether or not they are in agreement with them.

Members will seek to state their own concerns and interests clearly, listen carefully to others and explore issues from all points of view before forming conclusions.

Members are encouraged to express all points of view and perspectives on issues and alternatives and to seek to identify areas of agreement as well as reasons for different points of view in providing their advice to the City.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIR

The Chair shall be in charge of the floor.

The Chair shall be empowered to make decisions on the relevance of issues proposed for the stakeholders group after discussion with the group.

The Chair shall be the designated spokesperson for the process and its progress.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FACILITATORS

The facilitators are impartial individuals who guide the process, including facilitating stakeholders group meetings and subgroups meetings (if subgroups are formed).

The responsibility of the facilitators is to keep the group focused on the agreed-upon task, to suggest alternative methods and procedures, and to encourage participation by all group members.

The facilitators will work with the Chair to prepare meeting agendas. The facilitator will prepare meeting summaries, coordinate meeting logistics, and draft products and reports of the stakeholders group.

The facilitator will assist in keeping communication open between the stakeholders group and City staff. In particular, the facilitator will work to assure that the group's informational needs relative to the advice it is asked to provide are met in a timely and effective manner.

OBSERVERS

Observers are welcome at all stakeholders group meetings but will not be seated at the table or participate in discussions. A time may be set aside in the agenda of each meeting for comments or questions from observers.

MEETINGS

The group will meet approximately twice a month from March through October except for the months of June, July and August when one meeting per month is expected. Once each quarter, a community forum will replace the stakeholders group meeting.

Meetings are expected to occur in the late afternoon at a convenient location in the Northgate area unless otherwise designated by the group. Dates and place of meetings will be confirmed by the group.

Meetings will begin and end on time.

Meetings will be task oriented with agenda prepared and distributed in advance.

Information will be provided prior to and during each meeting to support informed discussion.

MEETING SUMMARIES

A written summary of discussion and comments from each meeting will be prepared by the facilitators and reviewed by the stakeholders group before it is considered final.

Meeting summaries will describe areas of agreement and disagreement, clarifying where and why there is disagreement. Every effort will be made to state all points of view clearly and fairly.

Meeting summaries will be sent to stakeholders group members, electronically where possible. Summaries will also be posted at the City's website. Stakeholders group members, observers and other interested individuals without Internet access may ask to receive summaries of stakeholders group meetings by regular mail.

INTERNAL DECISION-MAKING

The stakeholders group may reach consensus on advice it provides to the City but consensus is not required.

When the group does not reach consensus, it will report different perspectives held on the issue and the rationale behind the perspectives. A single statement of advice, encompassing both issues on which there is agreement and issues on which there are differing perspectives, will be prepared, reviewed and approved by the stakeholders group before it is provided to the City.

COMMUNICATION DURING PROCESS

The Chair and the facilitators shall be the designated spokespersons for the process and its progress.

Members of the stakeholders group accept the responsibility to keep their associates and constituency groups informed of the progress of the discussions and to seek advice and comments.

Members agree they will try to work out their differences at the table instead of in the media.

PRODUCTS

The stakeholders group will review and approve the wording of its advice on issues under consideration before the advice is presented to the City.

Interim and final reports of the stakeholders group's work and results shall be approved by the group before they are provided to the City.

MEDIA

When appropriate, a joint statement for media release will be developed by the group. Members will discuss the process and substance of stakeholders group deliberations with the media in the spirit of such joint statements and fairness to all.

The Chairperson will be the designated official media spokesperson for the group and its process.